

WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING

MINUTES

OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON
AUGUST 19, 2004

The Washington State Conservation Commission (Commission/WSCC) met in a special session August 19, 2004 at the Department of Ecology in Lacey, Washington to approve the July 15, 2004 Meeting Minutes and the 2005-07 Biennial Budget Decision Packages. This meeting was also available telephonically. The meeting was called to order by Commission Chair Tracy Eriksen, at 12:34 p.m. The later start time was due to attaining a quorum of members present.

SUMMARY OF MOTIONS & ACTION ITEMS

1. *Approval of Minutes:*

Commissioner Boyum moved to approve the July 15, 2004 Meeting Minutes with noted corrections. Commissioner Peeler seconded. Motion passed.

2. *WSCC Grants Program:*

Commission Reid moved that to authorize the change in Assessment Assistance funding based on new WACD Livestock Committee survey information from \$136 per CAFO to \$121.27 per CAFO. Commissioner Peeler seconded. Motion passed.

3. *Operating 2005-07 Biennium Budget Decision Packages :*

Commissioner Brown moved to approve the Merit System Increments decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Reid seconded. Motion passed.

Commissioner Brown moved to approve the Self Insurance Premiums decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Reid seconded. Motion passed.

Commissioner Reid moved to approve the CREP Technical Assistance decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion passed.

Commissioner Reid moved to approve the Basic Funding decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. WSCC Staff is to research with our Assistant Attorney General the proposed language change in RCW 89.08.410. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion passed.

Commissioner Brown moved to approve the Administration decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Reid seconded. Motion passed.

Discussion ensued regarding the additional FTEs and associated funding. Caution and concern was raised by the Commission in asking for additional FTEs in this biennium. They asked that staff be cognizant in the situation and look at the real risks. Perhaps redefine the scope of work of the FTEs. It may not be necessary to ask for an FTE for Irrigation Efficiencies. Commissioner Peeler has more information and will supply to WSCC staff.

Commissioner Reid moved to approve the Information Technology Support decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion passed. Commissioner Peeler abstained.

Commissioner Reid moved to approve the Engineering decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commission Brown seconded. Motion passed. Commissioner Peeler abstained.

1 Commissioner Bahrych moved to approve the Auditing decision package for the 2005-07
2 Biennium. Commission Reid seconded. Motion passed. Commissioner Peeler voted no.

3 *Capital 2005-07 Biennium Budget Decision Packages:*

4 Commissioner Brown moved to approve the CREP decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium
5 with an \$8,500,000 cap so that WSCC staff has the ability to update estimated costs.

6 Commissioner Reid seconded. Motion passed.

7 Commissioner Reid moved to approve the \$4,000,000 requested CREP Cost Share–Carry
8 Forward decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion
9 passed.

10 Commissioner Reid moved to approve the requested \$175,000 Implementation–Carry Forward
11 decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion passed.

12 Commissioner Bahrych moved to approve the requested \$4,000,000 Implementation–New
13 decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion passed.

14 Commissioner Brown moved to place a cap of \$6 million based on the best and latest figures of
15 the Livestock and Water Quality decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner
16 Bahrych seconded. Motion passed. Commissioner Peeler abstained.

17 The Commission would like to see the methodology of the request so they are assured that they are
18 real numbers. It was acknowledged that more work will be done on this decision package. It was
19 suggested that EQIP funds be considered so that it can assist in leveraging a significant amount of
20 federal dollars for this program.

21 Commissioner Brown moved to support the Department of Ecology’s \$3.5 million budget
22 request for Irrigation Efficiencies in the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Reid seconded.
23 Motion passed.

24 Commissioner Bahrych moved to approve the requested \$840,000 in the Puget Sound
25 Implementation-New decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Reid seconded.
26 Motion passed.

27 Commissioner Brown moved to approve the requested \$50,000 in the Puget Sound
28 Implementation-Carry Forward decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Reid
29 seconded. Motion passed.

30 Commissioner Bahrych moved to approve the requested \$650,000 in the Limiting Factors-New
31 decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Reid seconded. Motion passed.

32 Commissioner Reid moved to approve the requested \$48,000 in the Data Management-New
33 decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Bahrych seconded. Motion passed.

34 Commission Brown moved to approve the requested \$1 million in the CARA Loans-New
35 decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Reid seconded. Motion passed.

36 4. *Priority Ranking of Decision Packages*

37 Commissioner Brown moved to authorize WSCC staff in prioritizing the operating and capital
38 decision packages based on information gathered from each of the Members. Members will
39 deliver their priority ranking numbers by the close of business on August 20, 2004 where it will
40 be compiled and recorded on the 2005-07 Budget Decision Packages. Commissioner Reid
41 seconded. Motion passed.

ATTENDEES

Commission Members

Tracy Eriksen, Chair
Ed Adams, Member, WSU (telephonically)
Lynn Bahrych, Member
Dave Peeler, Member, DOE
Jaclyn Reid, Member
Paul Stoker, Member, WACD (telephonically)

Commission Staff

Mark Clark, Executive Director
Mary Anderson, Executive Assistant
Debbie Becker, Administrative Programs
Jon Culp, Irrigation Efficiencies Program Mgr. (telephonically)
Tom Salzer, Field Services Mgr.
Stu Trefry, Field Services Mgr.
Cheryl Witt, Contracts Specialist (telephonically)

Guests

Fred Colvin, WACD
Bobbi Lindemulder, King CD (telephonically)
Carolyn Kelly, Skagit CD (telephonically)
Megan Stewart, Asotin CD (telephonically)
Joe Stohr, DOE

Melodie Selby, Water Quality, DOE
Laurie Crowe, South Yakima CD (telephonically)
Jim Jesernig
Dave Mastin (telephonically)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Bahrych moved to approve the July 15, 2004 Meeting Minutes with noted corrections. Commissioner Reid seconded. Motion passed.

WSCC GRANTS PROGRAM

Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) Livestock Committee Revised Recommendations

Cheryl Witt, WSCC Grants Officer introduced the revised recommendations for the Livestock Committee. At the WSCC July Meeting, the Commission authorized six funding recommendations made by the Committee for distribution of \$250,000 in Livestock funding. Item number six of those recommendations provided for \$99,200 of Assessment Assistance to be distributed in the amount of \$136 per large or medium Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). This amount was determined by a survey conducted in the spring of 2004. After reviewing the data, it was found that the CAFOs by conservation districts were not broken out. This resulted in an increase in the number of CAFOs in the state and a change in the amount each CAFO should receive in Assessment Assistance which would reduce the assistance to \$121.27 for each CAFO.

A discussion was held on definition of CAFOs according to the USDA. The definition used for these purposes was the from the WSDA website. The survey conducted included the medium and large organizations. There are approximately 118 priorities that have been identified.

Commission Reid moved that to authorize the change in Assessment Assistance funding based on new WACD Livestock Committee survey information from \$136 per CAFO to \$121.27 per CAFO. Commissioner Peeler seconded. Motion passed.

Discussion ensued regarding any other changes that may occur on the figures. It was determined that through the Committees review all were accounted for. The monies will be distributed on August 23, 2004.

WSCC DRAFT 2005-07 BIENNIAL BUDGET DECISION PACKAGES

Mark Clark, Executive Director, gave an overview of the Draft 2005-07 Biennial Budget decision packages. There is approximately a 17% increase in the operating packages and 25% increase in the grant funding due to an attempt to move the administrative costs from the grant side to the general fund, additional staff to handle the increased workload, and the WACD Taskforce recommendations. These numbers may adjust as we move forward.

A discussion followed on the increases. The increases are minimal. The Commission handles approximately \$25 million in grants. The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is the majority of the increase.

OPERATING

Merit System Increments Decision Package - New

Mr. Clark introduced Debbie Becker of Administrative Programs to present the decision package.

WSCC has twelve employees. Four of these employees are Merit System Employees. They are responsible for the direct management of 280 grants and 120 loans worth \$25 million as well as the annual election/appointment management of the 96 conservation district. The agency is requesting an appropriation for the biennium that reflects the automatic merit system increases provided to these employees. These are ongoing costs.

Commissioner Brown moved to approve the Merit System Increments decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Reid seconded. Motion passed.

Discussion centered on the ongoing costs. This request is a maintenance level increase. Agencies are encouraged to include these increments in their biennial decision packages.

Self Insurance Premiums - New

Ms. Becker presented the decision package.

WSCC manages more than 280 contracts and loans worth \$25 million, manages elections and appointments for 240 conservation district supervisors and provides technical and professional information and guidance to nearly 300 conservation district staff and supervisors statewide. The agency employs twelve people, four of which are located in the field. The agency has not had a claim filed against the risk management pool and is requesting a technical change to the budget correcting a budget error from the previous biennium budget submittal. These are ongoing costs.

Commissioner Brown moved to approve the Self Insurance Premiums decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Reid seconded. Motion passed.

A discussion followed on the division of the funding sources for the Self Insurance Premiums. The agency determines how the costs are split between the funds.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Technical Assistance – New

Ms. Becker presented the decision package. This package was prepared in coordination with the Washington Association of Conservation Districts CREP Taskforce Subcommittee.

This request will provide funding for cultural resource surveys required on all CREP projects and thereby encourage local landowners to increase their participation in the restoration of any riparian area of salmon-bearing streams. The WACD CREP Taskforce Subcommittee felt it was important to restore the money that was taken out last biennium.

Commissioner Reid moved to approve the CREP Technical Assistance decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion passed.

Basic Funding – New

Stu Trefry, Field Service Manager and Carolyn Kelly (Skagit CD) presented the Basic Funding decision package. This package was prepared by the Washington Association of Conservation District's District Operations Committee.

The number one request from the districts was to address the need of basic funding for their districts so that the districts have more stability.

Commissioner Reid moved to approve the Basic Funding decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. WSCC Staff is to research with our Assistant Attorney General the proposed language change in RCW 89.08.410. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion passed.

A discussion ensued regarding the Committee's proposed change to RCW 89.08.410. Concern was raised regarding the authorization in RCW 89.08.410 and if the proposal would negate the intended authorization. It was determined that more research is to be done with the Assistant Attorney General before the RCW is proposed to the Legislature. It is important that the change does not change the intended authorization given by the Legislature.

Administration – New

Mark Clark presented the decision package. The decision package is labeled Grant Project Coordination.

It is important that state agencies coordinate on data collection, management and auditing. WSCC needs to be in a position to regularly and credibly report the implementation of environmental projects in accordance with the Priorities of Government (POG).

WSCC is requesting 2.75 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) and funding for 1.75 FTEs to support the strategies outlined in Legislative appropriations and the goals listed in the WSCC Strategic Plan. This proposal calls for adding 1 FTE to provide administrative support. One half time (.5) FTE to add a new Western Washington Field Service Manager and a quarter (.25) FTE to address the needs of the cultural resource protection to aid in the understanding between tribal governments and private landowners. One unfunded FTE is requested for the Irrigation Efficiencies Program. While the Irrigation Efficiencies Program is funded through an interagency agreement with the Department of Ecology, the program does not have an FTE accredited to the program. This program will not need additional funding.

Commissioner Brown moved to approve the Administration decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Reid seconded. Motion passed.

Discussion ensued regarding the additional FTEs and associated funding. Caution and concern was raised by the Commission in asking for additional FTEs in this biennium. They asked that staff be cognizant in the situation and look at the real risks. Perhaps redefine the scope of work of the FTEs. It may not be necessary to ask for an FTE for Irrigation Efficiencies. Commissioner Peeler has more information and will supply to WSCC staff.

Operating IT Services – New

This decision package is labeled Information Technology Support. Debbie Becker of Administrative Programs presented the decision package.

The Information Services Board Information Technology (IT) Standards require agencies to have in place adequate protective measures for the secure use and control of facilities and equipment to reduce the risk of compromised data due to physical break-ins or unauthorized access to computing resources. The portfolio facilitates the alignment of technology investments with agency business needs and the analysis and proper mitigation of IT investment risks. The agency is requesting .5 FTE to address these expanding requirements associated with the IT Portfolio.

1 **Commissioner Reid moved to approve the Information Technology Support**
2 **decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Brown seconded.**
3 **Motion passed. Commissioner Peeler abstained.**

4 Commissioner Peeler abstained because the Water Quality Account is the funding for this position.

5 A discussion followed regarding the funding for the positions.

6 ***Engineering – New***

7 The decision package is labeled Professional Engineering Grants Program. Mark Clark presented the
8 decision package. This package was prepared in coordination with the Professional Engineering Services
9 Taskforce.

10 The Professional Engineering Grants Program is a partnership between WSCC and the 48 conservation
11 districts that promotes and supports engineering services to landowners for implementation of best
12 management practices. Through this program, WSCC provides grant funding to “clusters” of conservation
13 districts that enable them to hire a professional engineer and accomplish the engineering workload
14 prioritized by each respective cluster that results in “getting conservation on the ground.”

15 Budget needs were compiled and includes equipment for two of the clusters.

16 **Commissioner Reid moved to approve the Engineering decision package for**
17 **the 2005-07 Biennium. Commission Brown seconded. Motion passed.**
18 **Commissioner Peeler abstained.**

19 Commissioner Peeler abstained because the Water Quality Account is the funding for this position.

20 ***Auditing – New***

21 This decision package is labeled Supporting Local Accountability. Mark Clark presented the decision
22 package.

23 Financial support necessary to assure regular and timely audits of conservation district operations will be
24 provided in fulfillment of statutory obligations of WSCC and the State Auditor. Audits assure citizens
25 their local conservation district is appropriately managing public funds and operating properly.
26 Centralizing payment of local conservation district audits promotes efficiencies with the WSCC and the
27 State Auditor; lack of centralization would increase audit costs.

28 Tom Salzer, Field Service Manager, gave an overview of the districts audit history. Additional audit costs
29 such as travel were not included within the previous budgeted amount but are included in this package.
30 The Commission previously set a policy that stated that they will split the cost of those audits that are not
31 'regular' audits. This package includes additional funding to cover a portion of unanticipated audit costs in
32 those districts that may have problems.

33 It was discussed that audits are a vital source for the conservation districts. Supervisors depend upon the
34 audit reports to ensure that the districts are appropriately managing their funds and operating properly.

35 **Commissioner Bahrych moved to approve the Auditing decision package for**
36 **the 2005-07 Biennium. Commission Reid seconded. Motion passed.**
37 **Commissioner Peeler voted no.**

38 Commissioner Peeler voted no because the Water Quality Account is proposed to fund this package.

39 A discussion ensued. Concern was raised regarding the high percentage of funding from the Water Quality
40 Account used in this package proposal. Audits are a basic expense. The Legislature gave the Commission
41 a lump sum to help the districts run their offices. It was noted that the amount set by the Legislature has
42 not met the historical need.

43 ***Cultural Resources***

44 Stu Trefry, Field Service Manager updated the Commission on the status of cultural resources. No
45 decision package will be prepared for the 2005-07 Biennium.

The Office of Financial Management (OFM) directed The Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (CTED) in consultation with the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WSDFW) and the WSCC to submit analysis that identifies ways to streamline the process of identifying and protecting tribal cultural resources.

A meeting has been held by CTED with WSDFW and WSCC on these cultural resource issues and will be ongoing to submit the analysis to OFM. The Department of Parks and Recreation has been helpful in cultural resources.

CAPITAL

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Cost Share – New

Debbie Becker of Administrative Programs and Carolyn Kelly of Skagit CD presented the decision package. This package was prepared in coordination with the Washington Association of Conservation Districts CREP Taskforce Subcommittee.

Through successful voluntary landowner participation, the CREP program removes livestock and agricultural activities from the riparian area of salmon-bearing streams. The sites are planted with native trees and shrubs for a contract period of 10-15 years. Improved salmon habitat and cooler, cleaner water without negative financial impacts to the landowners for removing the area from production are the results of this program. This voluntary program is the result of a contractual agreement between the State of Washington and the United States Department of Agriculture established in 1998.

Commissioner Brown moved to approve the CREP decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium with a \$8,500,000 cap so that WSCC staff has the ability to update estimated costs. Commissioner Reid seconded. Motion passed.

Discussion followed regarding the estimated costs. The package requests approximately \$8,500,000 in new funding which will bring the program back to the original amount funded when the program started. True numbers are still being developed.

CREP Cost Share – Carry Forward

The decision package requests \$4,000,000 to be carried forward to the 2005-07 Biennium. This package was prepared in coordination with the Washington Association of Conservation Districts CREP Taskforce Subcommittee.

Commissioner Reid moved to approve the \$4,000,000 requested CREP Cost Share–Carry Forward decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion passed.

Implementation - Carry Forward

Stu Trefry, Field Service Manager presented the decision package. This decision package requests \$175,000 to be carried forward to the 2005-07 Biennium. The decision package is labeled Water Quality Grants Program.

The Water Quality Implementation Grants Program provides private landowners with technical assistance and cost share dollars from local conservation districts to proactively, voluntarily and on a non-regulatory basis, fix current and potential agricultural water quality problems. Some landowners may also be referred to conservation districts by state and local regulatory agencies to fix specific water quality problems to prevent penalties from being assessed. Additionally, the program contains a water quality monitoring competitive grant program to provide additional emphasis for high-priority watersheds.

Implementation – New

This decision package requests \$4,000,000 in new funding for the 2005-07 Biennium. The decision package is labeled Water Quality Grants Program – New.

Commissioner Reid moved to approve the requested \$175,000 Implementation–Carry Forward decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion passed.

1 **Commissioner Bahrych moved to approve the requested \$4,000,000**
2 **Implementation–New decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium.**
3 **Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion passed.**

4 A discussion followed on monitoring types and what the expectation is. It was suggested that the Water
5 Quality Program shape the program to fit those needs.

6 ***Livestock - New***

7 Mr. Trefry presented the decision package. The decision package is labeled Livestock and Water Quality.
8 The package requests \$4,870,000 in funding for the 2005-07 Biennium. This package was prepared in
9 coordination with the Washington Association of Conservation Districts Livestock Committee.

10 The Livestock and Water Quality Program provides private landowners with technical assistance and cost
11 share dollars from local conservation districts to proactively, voluntarily and on a non-regulatory basis, fix
12 current and eliminate future agricultural water quality problems resulting from the production of livestock.
13 Some landowners may also be referred to conservation districts by federal, state and local regulatory
14 agencies to fix existing livestock and other water quality problems as a means to prevent penalties from
15 being assessed.

16 Mr. Trefry stated that there is support and endorsement of this package outside the Commission and
17 districts by the Washington State Dairymen's Federation, the Washington Cattlemen's Association and the
18 Poultry and Egg producers. WACD conducted a survey and they are working on getting the latest figures.
19 Mr. Trefry recommended that a cap of \$5.5 million be placed on this funding source.

20 **Commissioner Brown moved to place a cap of \$6 million based on the best**
21 **and latest figures of the Livestock and Water Quality decision package for**
22 **the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Bahrych seconded. Motion passed.**
23 **Commissioner Peeler abstained.**

24 A discussion was held concerning Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and if monies are
25 available for landowner cost-share. Mr. Trefry told the Commission that, in the process of getting
26 endorsements from the industry groups, he encouraged them to show-up at their local working groups for
27 EQIP to make livestock a priority for funding. The Commission stated that it is important to base the
28 Commission's budget request on real numbers and not assumptions. The Commission would like to see
29 role of the federal programs (such as EQIP and the Technical Service Provider (TSP) program for
30 technical assistance) better defined in the decision packages. It was acknowledged that more work will be
31 done on this decision package. It was suggested that EQIP and TSP funds be considered so that the
32 Commission's request can assist in leveraging a significant amount of federal dollars for this the Livestock
33 Water Quality program as well as other Commission programs.

34 ***Irrigation Efficiencies***

35 Mark Clark introduced Joe Stohr of the Department of Ecology (DOE) and Jon Culp, Irrigation
36 Efficiencies Program Manager.

37 Mr. Stohr gave a quick overview of the Irrigation Efficiencies Program. The Legislature's intent was to put
38 the money on the ground. There are lots of opportunities to streamline the water conserved through the
39 length of the contract through the Water Trust Program.

40 The Department of Ecology valued the relationship with WSCC working through the conservation districts
41 at the local level. The advantage of the Irrigation Efficiencies Program is that there is an incentive to build
42 credibility in the water acquisition program. Farmers are getting what they need and water is getting saved.

43 DOE is requesting a \$3.5 million decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium.

44 **Commissioner Brown moved to support the Department of Ecology's \$3.5**
45 **million budget request for Irrigation Efficiencies in the 2005-07 Biennium.**
46 **Commissioner Reid seconded. Motion passed.**

Puget Sound Implementation – New and Carry Forward

This decision package requests new funding of \$840,000 for the 2005-07 Biennium. Stu Trefry presented the decision package. The decision package is labeled Puget Sound New. WSCC staff prepared this package in coordination with Carolyn Kelley of Skagit Conservation District.

The Puget Sound Plan Implementation Grants Program provides resources to private landowners through conservation districts to help implement projects that meet the goals and strategies of the Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan. In consultation with Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team staff, conservation districts will implement projects with private landowners to proactively, voluntarily and on a non-regulatory basis, fix current and potential water quality problems. This is the only state agency grant program that is directly tied solely to the goals identified in the Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan.

Commissioner Bahrych moved to approve the requested \$840,000 in the Puget Sound Implementation-New decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Reid seconded. Motion passed.

Puget Sound Implementation – Carry Forward

This decision packages requests a carry forward of \$50,000 for the 2005-07 Biennium. This decision package is labeled Puget Sound District Grants.

Commissioner Brown moved to approve the requested \$50,000 in the Puget Sound Implementation-Carry Forward decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Reid seconded. Motion passed.

Limiting Factors – New

Mark Clark presented the decision package. The Limiting Factors Program has an integrated approach with the Office of the Interagency Committee. The Priorities of Government will be looking closely at the Limited Factors Program in the near future. This request is for two staff and one Geographic Informational Systems specialist in the amount of \$650,000. This package is labeled Salmon Habitat Factors.

The Salmon Habitat Limiting Factors Monitoring Program is a proposed revised program created by the Salmon Recovery Act in 1998. It will focus on private agricultural lands and address the data gaps described in each limiting Factors Report using the methodology recommended by the Comprehensive Monitoring Strategy and Action Plan for Watershed Health and Salmon Recovery. Executive Order 04-03 orders and directs such monitoring for salmon watersheds throughout the state. It will compliment identical efforts on non-agricultural lands that will be implemented by other agencies under the Executive Order 04-03.

Commissioner Bahrych moved to approve the requested \$650,000 in the Limiting Factors-New decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Reid seconded. Motion passed.

A discussion was held on the requested amount. The amount is for two biennia.

Data Management - New

Mark Clark presented the decision package. This decision package is labeled Coordinated Project Management System. The request is for \$48,000 for the 2005-07 Biennium.

In Fiscal Year 2004, \$25 million in federal cost share to private landowners will be distributed through conservation districts statewide. For Fiscal Year 2003-05, WSCC is provided \$22 million in cost share and technical assistance grants to conservation districts for development and implementation. A central data-financial clearinghouse does not exist to track funded and implemented projects as well as allow the online processing of vouchers and invoices through WSCC and the Office of Financial Management. This proposal is to provide for a pilot project that integrates natural resource data systems with emphasis on the financial management of these projects.

1 **Commissioner Reid moved to approve the requested \$48,000 in the Data**
2 **Management-New decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium.**
3 **Commissioner Bahrych seconded. Motion passed.**

4 A discussion followed. The Priorities of Government natural resource data information sharing is
5 recognized and has become a priority. A Request for Proposal will be developed for the web based
6 application. A larger group will be coordinating. It was also noted that Bob Nichols of the Governor's
7 Office, is interested in a coordinated natural resource information-sharing web based program.

8 ***Conservation Assistance Revolving Account (CARA) Loans - New***

9 Under the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program reimbursements from the USDA Farm Service
10 Agency cannot be issued until the entire practice is installed. Landowners can be responsible for
11 substantial costs during the 1-3 years it can take to install riparian buffers. In order to assist landowners
12 with these costs, the 2004 Legislature created the Conservation Assistance Revolving Account for WSCC
13 to administer. This decision package requests \$1 million. This package was prepared in coordination with
14 the Washington Association of Conservation Districts CREP Taskforce Subcommittee.

15 **Commission Brown moved to approve the requested \$1 million in the CARA**
16 **Loans-New decision package for the 2005-07 Biennium. Commissioner Reid**
17 **seconded. Motion passed.**

18 ***Priority Ranking of Decision Packages***

19 **Commissioner Brown moved to authorize WSCC staff in prioritizing the**
20 **operating and capital decision packages based on information gathered from**
21 **each of the Members. Members will deliver their priority ranking numbers**
22 **by the close of business on August 20, 2004 where it will be compiled and**
23 **recorded on the 2005-07 Budget Decision Packages. Commissioner Reid**
24 **seconded. Motion passed.**

26 **NEXT COMMISSION MEETING**

27 Commission Meetings September 15-16, 2004
28 Best Western Grape Vine Inn
29 1849 Quail Lane
30 Sunnyside, Washington 98944

32 **ADJOURNMENT**

33 Chair Eriksen adjourned the meeting at 3:16 p.m.